

Our Neighbourhood News

Did You Know?



On July 20th, 1998, this was all that remained of Henderson Avenue Public School. The York Region District School Board did not want to rebuild our school. The neighbourhood, represented by GARA, fought back and our school was saved.



The Grandview Area Residents Association (GARA) also actively participated in the lengthy consultation process that resulted in the murals on the bridge at Henderson and Proctor, the renewal of Grandview Park including a splash pad, skateboard spot and public washrooms and the installation of the playground at EJ Sand School.

www.thornhillgara.com
garamail@yahoo.ca
905 731 0284

GARA was founded in 1989 and continues to actively advocate for its residents.

- Membership is only \$10 per year!
- We would LOVE to hear from you! Please check out our website www.thornhillGARA.com
- All residents of the GARA area are welcome to attend GARA Executive Meetings held once a month (except for July and August) on Zoom. If you wish to attend please contact us at garamail@yahoo.ca for more information.

To read more about GARA's history and accomplishments visit www.thornhillgara.com/garas-history/

We wish to respectfully acknowledge that we live in the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinabek Nations, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We are grateful to live on this land.

From this ... to this!


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Both these pictures were taken at Grandview Park last summer. The first shows the scene around the garbage cans the day after someone left plastic bags of party garbage lying on the ground. The second shows a coyote in the woodlot silently watching a pair of small dogs playing on the baseball diamond.

It is important to see them as connected. Easy access to garbage brings mice and rats which in turn appeal to coyotes and foxes. Over the last few years, the area just the other side of Yonge Street has struggled with frequent coyote sightings and fears for the safety of small pets and children. That can easily happen here, harming both humans and wildlife. Please take home anything that will not fit in the bins provided and do not put household garbage in the park bins.

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An Invitation from Thornhill & Area Women's Club (TAWC)

Meet new people and make new friends in the area by joining in!

Our club has been going strong since 1972. We are a community based social group.

We have many group meet ups and events up and running regularly including Golfing, Book Clubs, Hiking, Travel Club, Breakfast Club, Girls Night Out, Morning Coffee and Games After-noon. Some activities are open to partners like Pub Night and Canapés and Conversation. So bring your significant other if you like! We are a very welcoming and friendly bunch :) Join in whatever you want to and come when you can. We are not for profit and have a monthly electronic Newsletter to catch you up on what's going on in TAWC.

Contact tawc.community@gmail.com for more information on joining.

We look forward to meeting you!

Tree Protection By-Law

Trees give us the air we breathe, shade us from heat and sun and contribute to physical and mental health. The City of Markham has recognized that without them all our lives would be much poorer and so even on private property, they are protected by the Tree Protection By-Law. Homeowners cannot simply decide a tree is inconvenient or unwanted and remove it. Look Out! The penalty for removing or damaging a tree unlawfully is up to \$100,000 per tree.

If a tree has a diameter of more 20 cm (8") when measured 1.37m (54") above the ground, you must have a permit from the city to remove or prune it. To find out more call the Markham Contact Centre, at 905 477-5530 or check <https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home/about/city-hall/bylaws/tree-preservation-by-law/09-tree-preservation-by-law>.

If you have concerns about a tree being removed or damaged, Monday to Friday, 8am to 5 pm, you can call the city at 905 477-5530. Outside of those hours, leave a message at 905 477-7000 ext 2050. This is the city's direct number for parking control; however the voice mail is monitored by a by-law officer 24 hours a day.



Call before you cut!

You need a permit before cutting a tree with a diameter of 20 cm (8 inches) or more measured at 1.37 metres (54 inches) above the ground.



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Break-in and Car Thefts

Unfortunately, in our neighbourhood over the past few months, there have been a number of cars stolen from driveways and homes broken into. We have heard from neighbours how uncomfortable they feel knowing this has been happening.



Many of us have been wondering how to protect our homes. Is there something we can actually do? Members of the GARA Executive have begun to gather a number of useful resources to learn how to improve our home security.

Here are a few examples:

- the York Region Police offer their community safety map which allows you to see what incidents have occurred in our specific neighbourhood or even street.
- Their website also offers many very useful concrete steps we can take to make our homes less vulnerable.
- The Ontario Provincial Police have created a home security audit giving us a great opportunity to look at our own properties and know exactly what would make a difference.

We have added a page to the GARA website with links to these resources and more. Please [take a look](#). We also plan to invite a home security expert to speak at our Annual General Meeting in the fall. Watch for the announcement.

Importantly, we also have the opportunity to harness the power of a caring neighbourhood. As a result of their concerns, residents on a few streets east of Henderson have started their own street-centred WhatsApp or email groups to keep in touch with each other and report any concerns they may have. A group like this can come together on an entire street or just within a single block. If you have questions to about how to get organized contact us at garamail@yahoo.com or phone 905 731-0284 and we can help.

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Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden

45% of the world's insects have disappeared due to habitat loss and climate change. Although some, like the dreaded mosquito, may not be missed, many others are vital to the richness of our world and particularly important, our dinner plates. Planting native plants is the easiest and most effective way to help these pollinators. Although plant pollination is aided by wind, animals, insects and even bats, bees do the most.

In Toronto there are about 360 species of bees. Almost all are solitary bees that nest in the ground or in tree cavities. Most don't sting!!! On the other hand, unlike the native bees, European Honeybees live in a colony and produce honey to sustain themselves over winter. The honeybee has no evolutionary dependent relationship on native plants.

Some of these vital insects require a specific plant on which to lay their eggs, and feed. The monarch butterfly needs milkweed for its survival. The native sweat bee prefers the evening primrose plant. Cutter bees prefer pokeweed. Mason bees require old snail shells to make their nest.



Should you wish to attract pollinators to your garden consider planting native pollinator plants for each of the seasons.

Spring flowering plants such as golden alexanders, wild geranium, and hairy beardtongue are a few suggestions.

Summer flowering plants such as pearly everlasting, butterfly milkweed, Canada anemone, little bluestem grass and turtlehead can help bring pollinators to your garden.

Flowering native plants suited for the fall season are stiff golden rod, New England aster and woodland sunflower.

There are many on-line guides to planting pollinator friendly gardens, including the David Suzuki Foundation (davidsuzuki.org) and Ontario Nature (ontarionature.org)

If you need assistance in choosing pollinator friendly plants or have any other gardening questions, our GARA volunteer garden experts are happy to help. It is a free service for all GARA members. Contact Peter Cox at pcox1@rogers.com or call 647-225-8963 for assistance.

Boredom Busters!

Summer can be the opportunity for very special family fun. It may mean trips out of town or into Toronto but what about affordable local fun?

Here are a few ideas.

- Of course, we have our very own Grandview Park splash pad, but what about the special pleasure of outdoor swimming? Tucked away in the park on the north west corner of Yonge and Centre Streets is Thornhill Outdoor Pool. More information at <https://www.vaughan.ca/explore-vaughan/community-centres/thornhill-outdoor-pool-summer-only>
- Another overlooked treasure is the Pride of Canada Carousel at 8080 Birchmount Road, in downtown Markham. The kids get to ride a unique carousel and develop an appreciation for art at the same time. It is made from metals collected across the country, repurposed into stunning sculptures intended to share Canada's story housed in an open glass pavilion. Canadian creativity at it best and quite fairly priced as well <https://downtownmarkham.ca/community/carousel/>



- How about bringing your children's history lessons to life? Perhaps they know more than you do? Then they can be your tour guides. The village of Thornhill was a bustling place by the early 1800's. The Thornhill Historical Society gives us a self guided walking tour to see sites associated with rebellion of 1837 or the famous artists of the Group of Seven. <http://www.thornhillhistoric.org/old/walktour/walktour.html>
- If our skate spot in Grandview Park is a little too small, check out the BMX bike park at Bayview and Cummer. This is a 3000 square metre park with a series of dirt jumps, berms, and tabletops accessible to riders with various skills and experience. Or for the skate boarders in the family, the Cummer Skatepark at Leslie and Cummer with banks, ledges, rails, a pyramid and small bowl offers new challenges. More information about both locations at <https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/recreation/skateboarding-bmx-mountain-biking/>
- If you are looking for a chance to spend some time lakeside but don't want to drive too far, Lake Wilcox in Richmond Hill is perfect. It has a playground, splash pad, large skate park, beach volleyball court, and waterfront boardwalk. It's on Bayview Avenue north of Stouffville Sideroad. <https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/things-to-do/Lake-Wilcox-Park.aspx>.



A Message from Our Councillor

Thank you for the opportunity to share this update with GARA members. Markham's Ward 1 is facing new development/redevelopment pressure unlike any other area of our city. The reasons are many. In addition to being a safe and desirable community with great schools and public amenities, the construction of the Yonge North Subway Extension –with five stations to serve our Thornhill neighbourhoods in Markham and Vaughan – is the major reason why.

Both the Region of York through the designation of Major Transit Station Areas and the Province of Ontario through its Transit Oriented Communities, are determined to build higher density mixed-use communities near transit stations. In doing so they hope to increase the supply of housing and jobs with access to public transit while reducing the dependency on cars. It is consistent with the provincial priority of building homes faster. The Yonge corridor from Cummer Avenue south to Highway 401 has been building out in this way for decades. The same will and is already occurring north from Cummer to Highway 407 and beyond.

I appreciate that this may come as unwelcome news to many, especially long-term Thornhill residents. However, I want to brace you for this impact and remind you of something I wrote in my Spring/Summer 2021 newsletter:

“...the Provincial Planning Act permits owners of land to entertain any changes, regardless of current zoning, by submitting an amendment to the Official Plan and/or a Zoning By-law amendment application. All municipalities, by law, must consider them. As I make decisions in the best interests of our community and city I seek information from several sources, consider all the options, look at the potential good and then do what I think is right for today and tomorrow. However, with new provincial housing legislation passed in 2022 — namely Bills 109, 23 and 39 — and the potential too of a Minister's Zoning Order being issued, municipal councils have less influence than ever before.”

Preventing Vehicle Thefts

I met with Senior Command Officers of York Regional Police District #2 in February to discuss issues of concern for Thornhill residents and vehicle thefts in particular. According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada a vehicle is stolen every six minutes in Canada.

Here are tips from YRP to help avoid having your vehicle stolen:

- Use an anti-theft device such as a steering lock or a Faraday car key signal protector
- Park in your garage or well-lit areas when away from home
- Consider installing an after-market GPS tracker
- If you have security cameras at your home, consider registering online with YRP's Security Camera Registry, and
- Don't forget to roll up your vehicle windows and lock your doors...always!

For more information, please visit www.yrp.ca

Keith Irish

Councillor, Ward 1 Thornhill, City of Markham

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www.markhamward1.ca

Grandview Area Residents Association (GARA)

Join GARA or renew your membership and be a part of the important work it does.

[Click here to join electronically](#)

or

Complete the form below and deliver or mail it along with your payment to:

Majda Ambrozic 12 Almond Avenue Thornhill, Ontario L3T 1L1

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E-mail addresses will not be used for any other purposes or shared outside of GARA .

GARA always needs your help in our community. Please indicate how you can contribute:

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Delivering Newsletters | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing Social Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying Markham Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Park and Woods Maintenance |
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Membership is \$10.00 per household per year. Payment by cash, cheque, etransfer (garamail@yahoo.ca) or on-line is welcome. Cheques payable to **Grandview Area Residents Association**

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